Declassified and Approved For Release 2012/12/11 : CIA-RDP06T01849R000200100054-4

AM-SOVCUBA SKED 9-3

9-3-79

PICTURE

BY KIRSTEN LUNDBERG

MOSCOW (UPI) -- THE SOVIET UNION MONDAY RIDICULED CLAIMS BY SEN. FRANK CHURCH, D-IDAHO, OF SOVIET TROOP REINFORCEMENTS IN CUBA AND NOTED THAT CHURCH MADE HIS DISCOVERY ON THE EVE OF THE NON-ALIGNED NATIONS MEETING IN HAVANA.

"THIS IS REALLY A SURPRISING PHENOMENON," THE OFFICIAL TASS NEWS AGENCY SAID.

"CHAIRMAN OF THE SENATE FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE FRANK CHURCH WITHOUT ANY OPTICAL EQUIPMENT WAS ABLE TO HAVE SEEN WHAT VARIOUS AMERICAN SPECIAL SERVICES COULD NOT FIND BEFORE HIM EVEN WITH THE HELP OF THE MOST ARTFUL TECHNICAL DEVICES.

"REALLY IT IS SURPRISING FARSIGHTEDNESS."

CHURCH SAID IN A NEWS CONFERENCE IN BOISE, IDAHO, JULY 31 THAT A SOVIET BRIGADE OF UP TO 3,000 TROOPS WAS DETECTED IN CUBA.

ON SEPT. 1, THE STATE DEPARTMENT PROTESTED TO THE SOVIET UNION AND CONFIRMED THE SOVIETS HAVE MOVED A BRIGADE OF TROOPS WITH ARTILLERY AND ARMOR INTO CUBA.

SOVIET AMBASSADOR VLADILLEN VASEV WAS CALLED IN EARLIER FOR CONSULTATION WITH AN AMERICAN OFFICIAL AND THE TOP U.S. DIPLOMAT IN CUBA, WAYNE SMITH, WAS INSTRUCTED TO RAISE THE MATTER WITH THE CUBANS.

CONSERVATIVE SENATORS HAVE SAID THE DISCOVERY SHOULD DELAY SENATE ACTION ON RATIFICATION OF THE SALT-2 TREATY UNTIL APPROPRIATE ACTION IS TAKEN BY THE SOVIETS.

STATE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN HODDING CARTER SAID THE TROOPS DO NOT CONSTITUTE A MILITARY THREAT TO THE U.S. MAINLAND OR THE U.S. NAVY BASE AT GUANTANAMO BAY, CUBA, BUT REFUSED TO SPECULATE ON THE SOVIET MOTIVES.

TASS NOTED THE DISCOVERY CAME ON THE EVE OF THE 6TH CONFERENCE OF NON-ALIGNED NATIONS IN HAVANA.

"WAS THAT AN ACCIDENTAL COINCIDENCE?" TASS ASKED.

THE ALLEGATIONS WERE MADE TO "DELUDE" THE DELEGATES AT THE FORUM IN HAVANA, AND TO "WEAKEN ITS ANTI-IMPERIALIST DIRECTION," TASS SAID.

CHURCH EARLIER DENIED THE TIMING OF HIS ANNOUNCEMENT HAD ANYTHING TO DO WITH THE NON-ALIGNED SUMMIT, WHICH HE TERMED "AN IMPORTANT EVENT WE HOPE CONTRIBUTES CONSTRUCTIVELY TO WORLD PEACE AND A BETTER LIFE FOR PEOPLE THROUGHOUT THE WORLD."

THE NEW BRIGADE OF SOME 3,000 TROOPS WOULD BRING THE TOTAL NUMBER OF SOVIET UNIFORMED PERSONNEL IN CUBA TO AS MANY AS 5,000, INCLUDING AN ESTIMATED 1,500 TO 2,000 MILITARY ADVISES. IN ADDITION, THERE ARE AN ESTIMATED 6,000 TO 8,000 SOVIET TECHNICIANS AND ADVISERS IN CUBA.

UPI 09-03 01:08 PED

Declassified and Approved For Release 2012/12/11 : CIA-RDP06T01849R000200100054-4